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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

April 30, 2003

Applicants : Bobby L. Dixon, et al.

For : METHOD OF TREATING CERAMIC CORES

Serial No. : 09/805 426

Group: 1725

Filed : March 13, 2001

Examiner: L. Tran

Confirmation No. 2086

Assistant Commissioner for Patents

Washington, D.C. 20231

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Dear Sir:

Please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

C1
1. (Currently Amended) A method of treating a ceramic core after molding and before firing for use in casting molten metallic material, comprising placing an unfired ceramic core having a molded core shape and having an organic binder on at least one setter, placing said at least one setter and said unfired ceramic core thereon on a conveyor that conveys said at least one setter and said unfired core through a heating oven, conveying said at least one setter and said unfired ceramic core through the heating oven to heat said at least one setter and said unfired ceramic core to an elevated [superambient] temperature at or above a softening temperature of said binder effective to soften said binder to reduce distortion of said unfired ceramic core, and removing said at least one setter and said unfired ceramic core having softened organic binder from said oven to cool to ambient temperature.

2. (Cancelled) /

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